

Darkness Pierced

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Summary: A lot of action thrown in, too! First fanfic, so please be gentle...er, a kissing scene, so...watch it. Not perverted @ all!

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>Part I
Secrets

>By: Sammie
"Who are these humans?" She heard herself think. Hidden in the high foliage of a tree, she saw the eight children that were so like her, yet so different. She soundlessly, swift and silent as a shadow climbed onto a limb that provided an overhead view to the one they called Izzy. The trees were her home, just as the water or air or plains or swamps were. In all actuality, she had no home, but that was a different story. She watched as he pulled out something from his backpack. She strained her eyes and looked. Then she looked again, in fact, she couldn't believe her eyes. Was it..yes! A digivice! These children were the DigiDestined...they were!

>"What are you doing, Izzy?" Asked the Tentomon beside him.
"I'm trying to decipher the hieroglyphics around the screen in this digivice...maybe it will give us a clue as to how to defeat the Dark Masters." Responded the dark-red haired boy. He then proceeded to go into some kind of trance, ignoring all his surroundings including the Tentomon. Only focusing on the digivice and computer.

>Dark Masters. How she shook in fear and loathing at the name. The title that the four mega digimon carried with them like an evil trophy. She had heard enough. She creaped back, forgetting everything except her memories. her foot slipped, showering the boy and the Tentomon with a mixture of leaves and bark. Not bothering to look at the damage she'd done, She crept back into the trees, down a tree trunk, and walked silently deeper into the forest.
"What was that?!" Izzy asked rather crossly. "Who did that!?"

>"What?!" TK looked up from his game of tug-of-war between Kari and Gatomon and himself and Patamon. Suddenly the rope snapped out of his hands "We won!" cried the opposing team triumphantly. Before TK and

Patamon had a chance to argue, Matt called them for lunch. Remembering his hunger, Izzy followed TK and Kari, forgetting about the incident just a few moments before.

>The DigiDestined's strange visitor stood staring at herself in the cool water of the lake. She looked like what she was supposed to be. Vixinmon, a mighty warrior, from a strong bloodline of warriors who served the light. There were others similar to her, but none like her. While the others had features, traces of lions or hawks or panthers, she had the strange traces of a fox. She was clothed in the scruffy remains of a leather half-shirt and skirt, refusing to be seen in the normal warrior's garb. It just brought back bad memories. Not that it mattered. She stood upright like any human, but had two copper-brown colored fox ears perched atop her head. There were embossments in the shape of a paw on the back of her hands and on top of her feet, from which claws the size of small knives sprung from. Her lower arms and legs were slightly furred, as were the embossments on her hands and feet. And so were the bat-like wings on her back and the fox-tail streaming out behind her. The wind blew her chin-length copper-brown hair back as her eyes stared out from slightly over-long bangs. She refused to let any tears spill out of her hard, brown eyes. Hard as her heart, from years and years of loneliness, of hiding, of fear. 11 years, to be exact. She could close here eyes and see it happen, unfold before her like it was yesterday.
Why did I have to be the last?!

>Deeper into her memories, 11 years back. The scout came just as they did. I could see Piedmon's confident smirk as he ordered his troupes to kill everything I lived for and loved. I was small for my age, so I ran. I hid under a mass of tree roots as I watched my friends, my family fall, at a frightening rate. We were one of the strongest, but they were stronger. I watched as my home, the modest cliff dwellings became splattered in blood. I was too terrified to move. I saw Piedmon raise his sword high and attack my father, the ruler of our race of warriors. My father, a seasoned and experienced warrior, blocked and parried but to no avail. The sword struck him over and over and over again.
Vixinmon's body jerked as if she was the one being hit. She could feel every blow as if it was happening to her just then.

>My father fell. Right beside my hiding place. Not even he could stop Piedmon.
"Papa?" I whimpered, crouched in my hiding place.

>He opened his eyes, silted with the cunning pupils of a panther. But still, even still, clouding over in death. "Vix" He said, calling me by my pet-name. "Stop...Piedmon...Hide...you...must...go...on" He gasped. "Wait...DigiDestined...stop Piedmon...last"
"Papa. Papa, are you okay? Papa!" But he was gone.

>I cried like I'd never cried before. It was like I'd cried all caring and love and emotion out of myself cause from then on I haven't cried one tear. All I lived for was revenge.
And I was going to get it.

>
Izzy didn't look exactly calm that night. Though dense, Mimi soon caught on.

>"Izzy, what's wrong?"
"It's an unexplained phenomena." Izzy said. She was kinda clear about the unexplained part, but what did Phenomena mean? Oh, well, it was never good to question Izzy when he was explaining something. "Something showered bark and leaves on me but when I looked up there was nothing there. It was like it never happened."

>"The wind, maybe?"
"I was considering that, but judging by the amount of leaves, it was a very physical and high-density object, digimon or otherwise, that moved the leaves. What do you think, Mimi? ...Mimi?"

>Snore
Izzy thought that it might be a good idea to get some sleep, too. After all, they did have their digimon if anything did go wrong.

>
Vixinmon stared at herself, focusing, focusing...then a bright golden light shone in her eyes. A swift wind spiraled around her then the whole thing stopped just as quickly as it had begun. She looked like any normal human, she looked like herself, minus the fox traces and wings. She was dressed in a regular shirt and pair of jeans, and instead of paw embossments she wore a pair of sneakers on her feet. Awkward things, but that wouldn't stop her. The only thing inhuman about her was her eyes. But then again, her eyes weren't digimon-like, either. The sun was just rising. By the time she made it to the camp they would be up, she was sure. Her plan? To join the DigiDestiend, who will sooner or later attract the Dark Masters again, especially Piedmon. She knew it was using them, but everyone gets abused one time or another, She would use the powers of their digivices and crests, drawing energy from them. She'd reveal who she was and digivolve into her Mega stage, whatever that was, and battle Piedmon to the finish.

>Or at least die trying.

>"We should stay in the forest, at least until the digimon are stronger, then we are sure to win! You even believed that ." Matt yelled in frustration.
"But we're not stronger! If you think that's what Piximon meant then you're messed up!" Tai contradicted.

>"Pixiemon said that we need one more thing, Tai. That means we still have to work for it, not everything is handed to you on a silver platter!" Matt spat out.
"I agree with him." A strange voice cut into the argument. Cut was the right word. It was calm like the sea but still demanded attention like ice or fire.

>16 pairs of eyes riveted to a nearby tree, against which someone was leaning. She had chin-length dark copper hair and a hard, challenging pair of brown eyes gazing out from underneath some slightly over-long bangs. She met each gaze calmly and steadily, never faltering, never wavering. Until at last she came to Matt. For some reason, an uncanny nervousness shook through her body and she couldn't look him in his piercing cobalt eyes.
Finally TK broke the silence "Are you a digimon or human."

>The stranger lifted a cocky eyebrow "What do you think."
"You look human."

>"Mm-hmm." She agreed
"Are you on our side or Piedmon's side?"

>Was it just him, or did this girl stiffen slightly at the mention of Piedmon? Matt thought secretively. Can we trust her? She looks human enough, a very foxy human at that...huh? Where'd that come from? But there was still something about her, something that made him mistrust her but also drew him to her, something...something...
"I don't know what your talking about." Vixinmon was slightly bothered about having to lie to someone that seemed so trusting and innocent, but still, her one priority, her only priority, was revenge. Nothing could get in her way...maybe. There was something about the blue-eyed boy, like a spell or a hypnosis over her that made her doubt she could ever look into his eyes, much less lie to him. "I accidentally got caught in that light of yours back in the real world and ended up here. I knew you'd be somewhere here so I went in search of you guys," She said, looking Tai straight in the eyes without flinching. She focusing all her attention on him like that made Matt flush with something...what was it...jealousy? "You take it from there." She finished with a shrug.

>"I believe her." Piped up Kari.
"Me too." TK agreed.

>"Well, If that is true, I'd hate to be in her shoes if we reject her." Mimi stated.
The stranger looked from Kari to TK to Mimi and finally rested on Tai. For a long time. This goof probably can't tell the difference between a lie and truth, anyway. Most of his head probably is used to grow that crop of hair, Vixinmon thought smugly.

>Matt couldn't stand her staring at Tai like that any more. "Well, I for one vote to let her in."
Choruses of agreement rang up from the group of digimon and humans. Tai held out his hand, saying "It's unanimous. Welcome to the group..er..ah."

>"V..." Vixinmon caught herself just in time. "Vanan."
Tai finished his sentence. Vixinmon AKA Vanan grasped his gloved hand in a hard and unfriendly manner. Then let go. "So what are we supposed to do know?"

>"Usually we get ready for breakfast. You see, It'll be some time before we can get you back to the real world." Izzy explained.
He was met with a nonchalant shrug.

>"But if you want, you can go with Matt to get some firewood." Izzy offered. "Introductions can be made later."
>"Better than sitting around here. Which one is Matt?"

>"Oh, he's right over there." Said Izzy, pointing.
Vanan (Vixinmon will be called this from now on.) Was able to keep the gleam of fear and nervousness away from her eyes. What was so special about him, anyway? But no matter how she consoled herself she still couldn't untie the knot in her stomach. She had practice, 11 years of practice, in controlling her emotions. Now she pulled forth every last bit of it, and barely kept her step from wavering. She broke into a run as he disappeared into the forest.

>
Matt barely heard the footsteps until she was right beside him.

>"Ahh!" He yelled, dropping three logs he had already gathered.

Vanan immediately gathered one and Matt picked up the other. Then, just as Vanan put her hand on the third, Matt put his hand over hers. Both of them froze. Vanan stared at their hands, and then raised her eyes to meet his cobalt-blue ones. She was spinning in a rush of emotion, and before she knew it, their lips were barely brushing each other. She pulled back, picking up the log and continued to walk on. Matt wasn't too far behind.

>"So, that's what it was." Matt figured. "But I just met her, but there's something that really draws me to her." After a pause "But then again, I think she's hiding something from us." He took a quick, sideways look at her, the wind pushing her hair back, revealing those eyes, beautiful, confused, hard, wondering, angry.
>"Hey, I'm sorry." He whispered.

>"'Bout what?"
"You know, back there."

>"Don't be. After all, it takes two to tango. It was my choice too."

What was I thinking!? Focus, Vixin, FOCUS! Revenge, first priority, remember!? But, still...no. He's a human, I'm a digimon. No further arguments. Period.

>Then she looked him straight in the eye. Not for a long time, not for a short time. Her eyes finally seemed to soften a little bit, letting him glimpse just a little bit of sadness. Then continued on in silence.

>During breakfast introductions were made. Everyone was impressed how easily she could remember everyone's names, and how easily she took being around the digimon. Vanan's heart seemed to be ripped into a billion pieces. They were so closely connected. Sometimes they fought, but there seemed to be no division between the digimon and humans. They treated each other like they didn't see the differences. There was Mimi and Sora, always willing to help and lend a hand. Then

Tai, who was a little...over-confident and conceited, but obviously cared for the group he tried so hard to lead. Then as Joe, the reliable voice-of-reason, and Izzy, a little oblivious to others when he was on his computer, but she was impressed by his eagerness to learn. Then Kari, who was acted so old for her age. And then Matt and TK, who shared a bond so strong it was almost scary. Matt's almost unfriendly coolness compared to TK's trust and innocence...and yet they were so close. And they were willing to accept her, a bloodthirsty liar. An she was using them. They didn't deserve this, but she had to. Piedmon had to be stopped by her, and no one else.

"How old are you?" TK asked.

>"13" She replied in a slightly cold manner.
"So, Vanan, where do you live?" Sora asked, kindly trying to include her in a conversation she a Mimi were having about where is the best place to live in Tokyo while they were taking down camp.

>"None of your business." She replied.
Mimi and Sora looked at each other and sighed. This, was going to be a long trip.

>About two whole weeks passed. Vanan was helpful, but unwilling to talk and even more unwilling to socialize.
"So, uh, you're not scared of any of the digimon?" Tai asked uncomfortably one day.

>Why does he even bother? Sora thought.
Gabumon patted her fondly on the back "I guess she isn't, compared to you guys when you first saw us!"

>"Yeah, Joe." Gomamon said pointedly.
"Well, excuse me!"

>Vanan didn't know why, but she decided not to be cold any more.

"Well, after all that's happened in the real world, I don't think I can be scared of anything anymore." Vanan replied, forcing a smile. It had been 11 years since she last smiled, even a forced one. Sora and Tai let out a long-held breath, thinking Maybe she isn't so bad after all. She noticed that they were walking on top of a beach cliff, below them the boiling, crashing surf. Not that it really mattered.
"Yeah, well just wait until you meet this Piedmon guy, he's not someone you'll want to mess with." Joe brought the conversation back to fear, something he knew about well. Suddenly Vanan's eyes fell to the ground and it was clear that she wasn't in the mood to talk anymore.

>"Stop scaring her!" Matt reprimanded Joe. "Hopefully, we'll get you back before we run into him again, or any other evil digimon." Matt comforted her. Or so he thought.
"No offense, Matt, but I don't need you to look out for me like that, I can take care of my self."

>The gentle refusing of his protection stung to Matt like a slap in the face. The others were just waiting for him to yell at her, every eye was on him...except Vanan. Here warriors instincts rose in her chest. It took every last effort to hold them down. She could sense battle. Then there it was! It rose like a bird of prey from the ground, making it quiver. Landing, it finally took the dragon-like shape of Nightmon.
"This digimon lulls her victims to sleep with Comadust and puts an end to them with DarkBlade. Be careful, guys!" Izzy yelled over his computer.

>"Digivolving time!"
"Nova blast!" "Needle Spray!" "Meteor wing!" "Howling Blaster!" "Hand of Fate!" "Harpoon Torpedo!" "Electro-Shocker!" "Lightning Claw!"

>They were out cold before any of the attacks even made it.
"Master Puppetmon will be so pleased!" Nightmon whispered in her smooth, velvety voice. "When I bring the DigiDestined's heads to him on a platter!"

>That was when Vanan noticed a little silver gleam in Joe's bag. Yes, a pocketknife! Vanan grabbed it and unsheathed the middle blade,

trying to get a good balance for throwing. She took a mighty leap over Kari and TK and landed in a guarding position, warrior instincts on full blast.
"You'll have to get through me first." She snarled.

>"What is this? Darkblade!"
Vanan saw them coming before hand and nimbly dodged them, with more grace and speed than any normal human.

>Thank goodness the DigiDestined were too frightened to see that.
"Vanan, what are you doing!" Matt cried in desperation and fear. Fear about loosing her. About looking TK, His friends, His life. "Get back, you don't stand a chance!" He began to push Tai and Joe out of his way to get to Vanan. It took Tai, Joe, Izzy, and Sora to hold him back. "No, Vanan. VANAN STOP! COME BACK!!!" Matt struggled furiously.

>Meanwhile, Vanan craftily lured Nightmon to the cliff edge, which is where the battle was taking place. Nightmon was getting careless and frustrated. Good. Her plan would work if she kept on with this game for just a little while longer.
"Darkblade! Darkblade! Darkblade!" Nightmon screamed in frustration. The last attack bit Vanan's ribs, it was a little off, but blood started gushing out of the wound.

>"Vanan, NO!" Matt sobbed.
Ignoring the pain, Vanan felt rock crumble beneath her feet. Cliff's edge. This was it. Win to live or loose to die. Vanan threw the knife. It hit it's mark right between Nightmon's eyes. With a dying scream of rage, Nightmon rushed at Vanan, at the same time Vanan took a back wards leap from the cliff edge. The DigiDestined could hear Nightmon's screams of death as she plummeted over the cliff edge.

>"No." Matt whispered in denial. With a powerful lunge he freed himself from his companion's grips.
The other DigiDestined just stood stock still, not wanting to accept the inevitable, that the friend they knew for such a short time was...gone.

>Matt kneeled at the cliff edge and stared out over the scenery, unbelief written over his face as the sun set, like it was Vanan's own life symbol, and now that she was gone, it would sleep forever behind the mountains.
"Uh, a little help over here!? Hello! I'm not dead yet but I will be if someone doesn't PULL ME UP! My ribs are KILLING ME! If anyone is up there who has a brai..."

>"Vanan!" Matt gasped as he leaned way over the cliff.
"Oh, hi! CAN YOU PLEASE PULL ME UP OR DO I HAVE TO CLING TO THIS CLIFF BY MY PINKIE FINGER FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!?"

>Happily, with so much strength from the adrenalin left over, Matt helped her onto solid ground. He put his hands on her waist to steady her and felt some warm, sticky, stuff ooze through his glove. Blood.
"Vanan, your wounded." Matt realized, his voice thick with concern.

>"Duh. Now if you'll let me pass out now..." and with that she slumped against him. He immediately picked her up, cradling her against his chest.
"Is she okay?" Tai gasped.

>"She's wounded..." Matt answered, tears beginning to fill his eyes once more.
"Let's get into some cover." Joe suggested. "We can't treat her wounds out in the open, other digimon might attack." Matt simply nodded in agreement.

>"I'll go get some herbs to treat the wound." Palmon announced.
Matt felt someone squeeze his shoulder. He turned his head to see who it was.

>"She'll be okay." Tai reassured him.
"We'll all take care of her!" TK exclaimed.

>"I hope your right."

>Vanan felt every now and then. Felt the pain. Felt it when she was

force-fed, when her friends changed her bandages. Felt the warmth of the sun in the morning and the heat of the fire at night. She felt it when Matt would gently place his hand on her chest, just to make sure her heart was still beating. When he'd cover her up with his own blanket on those especially cold nights, when he'd lay down beside her, just looking up at the sky, somehow knowing that she knew he was there, when he, Gabumon, Patamon and TK would sleep right next to her, keeping their ever-faithful vigil over her, when he would just walk into the campsite, she knew, when he'd lean over every night and give her a small kiss on her cheek, and whisper to her "I love you, come back to me, I need you." And then she'd hear his harmonica, as it lulled her deeper into rest. It made her fight. It kept her from thinking that she was as good as gone, but deep in her heart she also felt the pain . Don't say that, Matt! Please, don't get attached to me in that way! You don't know who or even what I am! How she wished she could become human. Totally human. But she still had her family's honor to live up to. She owed it to them.

>
PART II

>The Crest of Guidance
"mmmm. Whaa...?" Vanan whispered groggily.

>"Vanan!" Matt gasped happily.
She lifted herself up, much more stronger then before. She felt his strong arms wrap around her and hold her close to him. "I was so worried." he whispered into her ear. She put a lonely, comforting arm around him and whispered "It's okay, I'm fine." But there was a foreboding darkness in her heart. Knowing what she must tell him...it broke her into a million pieces. "I love you." He whispered. She was waiting for these words. She loved to hear them. But it tore her to shreds. How can he possibly know what kind of impact they made on her. He wouldn't know that for 11 years she hadn't heard those words addressed to her at all. Matt sensed her hesitation and withdrew from her enough to look into her pain-filled eyes. "What's wrong?" "I love you too. But..." "Yeah?" "There are so many things you don't know about me, things that would affect your love for me for good." "But, Vanan, I-" "-no." She cut him off short. "I was never meant for you. I was never supposed to love you." Pain filled his cobalt blue eyes, a pain that tore at her soul. "I don't understand." He whispered, a lone tear falling down his cheek. She reached up and wiped it away. "I suppose I have to give you an explanation, but not now, not yet. I'm sorry." Suddenly he took off his glove and wiped something away from her eye.

>It was a tear.

>That was about all that she could take. She stood up, and, ignoring any pain, ran into the woods. Matt wanted to call after her but somehow could sense that she needed to be alone. He was torn in between so many places. Part of him was resentful and mad because he had already given his heart to her and she...well, didn't love him weren't the words. Part of him was denying that it ever happened, part of his still longed to have her, and still another part of him was just plain worried. Why? Why what...he didn't know exactly what he was questioning, but...why?
Vanan looked sadly at the rising sun, then suddenly did something that she never thought she'd do again. She buried her face in her hands and cried.

>"She loves you." Someone whispered. Matt turned around and came face-to-face with his digimon partner, Gabumon. "Maybe she isn't ready. Or maybe you aren't ready. Or maybe she's scared. Or is keeping a secret that she can't expose. Whatever it is, I know for certain that she does love you."
"How can you be so sure?"

>Gabumon laughs "It's the way she looks at you, the way she treats you. Even to the point when she said that she was never supposed to

love you." Gabumon stood up and offered to help Matt up. "We might as well get breakfast going. I'll look for fruit with Patamon and TK can go fishing with you, okay?"
"Okay."

>Matt looked down to his baby brother, the only person he'd struggled so long for, the only one that kept him going. Now, he thought, the only person that he could live for. TK opened his eyes and yawned "Hiya, Matt! Is it our turn to go fishing?" He asked groggily.
"Shhhh! Yup, it is. Bring Patamon and come with me."

>Before long breakfast was cooking, waking anyone who wasn't fully awakened by TK screaming in his ears.

>Just as they were stretching and getting the kinks out of their backs, Vanan walked into the camp, slightly limping from her wound. But one look at her deeply haunted eyes, and anyone could tell that she had been crying.
"Vanan! It's nice to see you're feeling better!" Beamed Kari, then whispered. "Vanan, your eyes are all red, you've been crying! What's wrong."

>"Oh, nothing Kari. I just had a bad dream and I was crying in my sleep." Vanan replied, Taking a seat in between Kari and TK and helping herself to some fruit. "It sure feels nice to be up again. Thanks guys."
"For what?"

>"For taking care of me when I was conked out."
"Well, compared to what you did, for us, it was the least we could do." Sora pointed out

>"How did you fight that big monster all by yourself, Vanan?" TK asked.
"When I'm mad, I can do anything." Vanan joked, waving the question off with an air of unease. She shifted into a 'better' position and hissed in pain.

>"Vanan!" Matt gasped, immediately by her side. "You should go back and rest."
Vanan re-shifted and shook her head. "If I keep doing that, I'll never heal."

>"Stop trying to act so tough. I don't know what your hiding from us but least you can do is accept some advice!"
"Matt, please." Vanan lowered her eyelids and a tear trickled down her cheek. She was hiding something.

>"Vanan, I just want you to feel better. I'm sorry if I got carried away...I'm just scared you'd bust open again."
Vanan looked up at him a smiled a reassuring smile. "Hey, your acting like my mother! I'm a big girl, I can take care of myself!" That broke the air of tension around them and brought a small chuckle from everyone.

>"Okay, okay. Just...take it easy."
Breakfast was finished up in a stream of good-natured ribbing (but not with Vanan, since it was there she was injured.) and jokes. Vanan helped as much as she could, and for one in a long time, she was really, truly happy.

>
"Quick, everyone!! Gather around, Gennai's here!" Izzy's voice rang out.

>Vanan cocked her head in curiosity and looked down at TK who was holding her hand in case she fell.
"Who's Gennai?"

>"You'll see!"
Soon they were all gathered around the illuminated image of a strangely small old man.

>"Hi, everyone! Your probably wondering how come I haven't contacted you yet. Well, when the digital world got reconfigured it destroyed a lot of my image-receivers. You know, the things that the images come out of. This one is one of the last."
"Well, it's good to see that your okay!" Tai stated. "I suppose your wondering who the eighth child it."

>"Yes, that's one of the first questions I was going to ask you. Who is it?"
"Gennai, this is my sister, Kari!"

>"Nice to meet you, Kari."
"Same to you, sir."
>"I've also found out that another member has joined your group."
"Yeah, Vanan. But...she just accidentally came to Digiworld on accident."
>"Nothing like that happens on accident. Just follow the spotlight and you'll find my house. We'll finish talking there." The light faded out.
"What does he mean?" Vanan muttered nervously.

>"Maybe you're a ninth DigiDestiend? None of us knew we were DigiDestiends until someone told us." Matt suggested
"Okay, so where's my digivice and crest?" Vanan challenged him rather hotly.

>"Maybe they're at Gennai's house."
>The lake was familiar to the first seven DigiDestiend, but it kinda freaked out Kari and Vanan. Before long, they were seated comfortably in a large room, relating to Gennai the last battle against VenomMyotismon.
"Well, It seems that you have been through a lot, and it was very nice getting to know the newest DigiDestiend." Gennai stated. Then switched his gaze over to Vanan. The way he looked at her made her shift her eyes to the floor. "But the real reason I called you all here is because..." He reached up onto a bookshelf and picked up a small, wooden box and opened it, revealing a crest and tag, but this crest and tag were different. instead of a gold tag this one was silver, and the crest seemed to be carved out of diamonds. It was a star-shaped symbol. This brought forth a gasp of awe from everyone.
>"Who's crest is it?" Matt whispered.
"Vanan's."
>"Huh?" Vanan asked. "Why...you're mistaken."
"The only way to know is to put it on." Gennai said, placing it around her neck. Vanan closed her eyes, unexplainably scared. The crest began to glow with a fierce light, then here eyes snapped open, but they were overtaken with a silver-like light, no pupil visible. The light then slowly faded.
>"It's her crest." Agumon stated the obvious.
"What crest is it?" Vanan asked quietly.
>"The Crest of Guidance."
"Of Guidance?"
>"You have been put here to guide the DigiDestiend through the final battle. Guidance requires love, courage, knowledge, reliability, sincerity, hope, light, and finally, most of all...
"friendship." She finished, looking momentarily at Matt. A sadness came over her.

>"But how could that be? I don't know the first thing about what we're up against..." Gennai cut her off. "You are hiding something, maybe you don't know it, but if you look into your heart, you'll see it. You'll be able to make the crest glow." He looked up at the others. "I know you're probably hungry and tired. Stay here and rest, at least until tomorrow!"

>"Sheesh, Joe!" Mimi teased. "I don't think you've left any food in Gennai's house untouched."
"Well, I was hungry."
>"Uhhh...we can all see that." Vanan, Kari, and Sora replied in unison. Then exchanged glances and burst into laughter.
"It's so nice that we've finally taken a bath, especially Tai." Kari kidded her brother. Tai just gave her a good-natured, withering glance.

>"Humans can be so silly." Gatomon stated.
The joking continued until, one by one, they all drifted to sleep.
>
Tai heard someone calling his name. "Leave me alone, mom, it's Saturday." He muttered. "Tai, we're in danger...please wake up." Huh? Why did mom sound like Vanan? "Wha-!" Vanan kept her hand over his mouth. "Be quiet. Got it?" He nodded. She let go of him. " Piedmon

can track your digivice signals. He's coming closer by the second. We have to get out of here. We're endangering Gennai. Not to mention being in danger ourselves."

>"What are we gonna do?"
"I have a plan, but we have to wake the others...fast."

>Everyone was awake, gathered at the back exit of Gennai's house.

"Okay, everyone give me your digivices."

>"Why?"
"That's how Piedmon know where we are. Give me your digivices and you go one way, I'll go the other. He'll be drawn away from you. I'll lead him on a goose chase, and then...I'll find some way to disable what he's using to track us or your digivices.

Remember, it's you who make your digimon digivolve, not the digivice."

>"No, Vanan." Matt said, "I won't let you. You could be killed."
"Yes, there is always a chance. But many more lives will be lost if I don't do this."

>"Vanan, I-"
>"If you love me you'd let me do this. It's called destiny Matt. This is my destiny."

>Suddenly the Crest of Guidance began to glow.
They all took this as an omen. Soon, Vanan was strapping seven digivices to her belt. Matt stood frozen, his digivice in his hand. She took his hand and gently pried the digivice out of his grip. Tears began to flow down his cheek.

>"No." She whispered.
"No what?" He sobbed.

>"I'm not gone. Believe that I'll make it and I will. Take a lesson from TK. Have faith. Have faith in me. I'm only as strong as you can make me."
"Goodbye, Vanan." TK began crying.

>"Listen to me! All of you. None of you know the first thing about me. But we are still friends. Friends never say goodbye, even if I don't make it. We still are friends...past the end." She grinned. "I can just see Piedmon trying to figure this out! Now, go. I'll meet you guys where I told you I'd meet you."
Grim-faced, they ran north, not knowing if they'll ever see their friend again.

>Meanwhile, Vanan was running at a northwest course, keeping a human speed, so as to deceive Piedmon. She became what she was born to be. A warrior. Lethal strength flowed through her veins as she ran, switching her course to the south. Listening carefully for the sounds of pursuit, she ran, forgetting almost everything except her friends, and Revenge. Finally, she heard the sounds of Gardramon and Mechanorimon in pursuit. She grabbed a digivice and studied it carefully. Yes. She recognized the writing around the screen of the digivice. It was very familiar. She remembered her mother patiently teaching it to her. She made sure that her enemies couldn't see her from their overhead view in flight. She pushed one button, then another, then repeated the process with the other seven. She heard her pursuers hesitate, but she remained hidden. When they finally started heading off, she ran full speed towards the north. She had 5 times the speed of any normal human, so she used all the strength and energy she had to get back to her friends. To go back to a place where she hasn't been for 11 years.
She wondered if the walls were still stained in blood.

>

>Part III
Love has Found a Way

>She skidded to a halt in a cloud of dust. The humble cliff dwellings were still almost the same. Broken pottery and weapons littered the floor. It took every effort for her not to turn and run. Her friends needed her.
"Vanan, No, it's a trap!!!" But Matt's warning came too late. Vanan was oblivious to the bubble-like shield around her as she saw a digimon punch Matt in the stomach. She tried to run to his

rescue but slammed into the shield, an electric shock streaming through her body.

>"Hehehe."
"Puppetmon!" Biyomon gasped.

>"Yeah, It's me. You were clever to figure out that we were tracking your digivices, but we can also track your crests, too." He turned to Vanan. "You were expecting Piedmon, but he told me all about his victory over your family. He knew that the last of your kin would get the Crest of Guidance, so now I'm gonna have a little 'flashback fun' with you, Vixinmon."
"Vixinmon!" The DigiDestiend gasped. But before anything else can happen, their consciousness was taken from them.

>
The first thing Vanan realized were the chains on her wrists. She slowly opened her eyes and looked at the chain tying her to the ground. She was in some kind of coliseum, and she could feel the DigiDestiend and their digimon watching her from behind. In front of her, a levitated screen stared down at her, and beyond that, what seemed to be a cliff.

>"Ladies and Gentlemen and Digimon. As you have found out, Digimon, you can't digivolve! I disabled that, but you can thank me later. Now, if you could focus your attention on the screen, you will see the charming and captivating life story of Vixinmon, or as you know her, Vanan. Suddenly an image appeared on the white surface. She looked up and saw...herself, when she was 1. She remembered this. Her father was teaching her how to extract her claws, and how to do an overhead swipe. It was odd seeing someone that looked so young and harmless practice ways of war. Then the image faded.
"Remember, Vixinmon?" Puppetmon taunted. "Next, I'm sure you'd remember this!"

>Deeper into her memories, 11 years back. The scout came just as they did. I could see Piedmon's confident smirk as he ordered his troupes to kill everything I lived for and loved. I was small for my age, so I ran. I hid under a mass of tree roots as I watched my friends, my family fall, at a frightening rate. We were one of the strongest, but they were stronger. I watched as my home, the modest cliff dwellings became splattered in blood. I was too terrified to move. I saw Piedmon raise his sword high and attack my father, the ruler of our race of warriors. My father, a seasoned and experienced warrior, blocked and parried but to no avail. The sword struck him over and over and over again.
Vanan screamed.

>My father fell. Right beside my hiding place. Not even he could stop Piedmon.
"Papa?" I whimpered, crouched in my hiding place.

>He opened his eyes, slit with the cunning pupils of a panther. But still, even still, clouding over in death. "Vix" He said, calling me by my pet-name. "Stop...Piedmon...Hide...you...must...go...on" He gasped. "Wait...DigiDestiend...stop Piedmon...last"
"Papa. Papa, are you okay? Papa!" But he was gone.

>I cried like I'd never cried before. It was like I'd cried all caring and love and emotion out of myself cause from then on I haven't cried one tear. All I lived for was revenge.
And I was going to get it.

>The image faded away again, Puppetmon's snide snickering was all that's left of any sound.
Then images filled the screen again. 11 years of loneliness, of despair, then a month ago, showering Izzy with bark and leaves, then transforming into a human, then the first time the face-to-face met the DigiDestiend, When she and Matt almost kissed, the battle with Nightmon, the first tear she cried in 11 years, Gennai's house, the Crest of Guidance, escaping the Guardromon, finding the DigiDestiend in her old home, life of lies and pain, but with a shimmer of light, of victory.

>Dead silence greeted the secret.
"Now, Vixinmon, why don't you

transform for us, huh?" Asked a mocking Puppetmon.

>Vanan just stared at him.
"Transform!" He said, slapping her.

>"KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF HER!" Screamed an outraged and stunned Matt.
"Oh, so I see. You still want her after all the lies she's told you. Hmm. Well, let me tell you something, you fell in love with someone who doesn't even exist!"

>"It's not about that. True, until now I didn't know the first thing about her. But I fell in love with who she really is. SO KEEP YOUR HANDS OFF HER, PUPPETMON!"
"Wow, my brother has guts!" TK whispered.

>"Well, we'll see if she feels the same way about you, Guardian of Friendship. Unchain her!" Two digimon immediately unlocked the manacles around her wrists. Finally able to turn around, she checked on the DigiDestiend to make sure they were okay. In one swift movement, she stripped herself of her belt with the digivices attached to it and threw it to them. "He he he. That won't give you any backup. In this coliseum, no digimon can digivolve!"
"Let's get outta here!" Tai shouted. But, then and the other DigiDestiend were surrounded by an array of Ultimate-stage digimon.

>"Maybe we should have kept that as our little secret." Sora told Tai.
Then a strange digimon stepped out of the shadows.

>"I'd like you to meet Transformon. He attacks with Poison Spear, but he can transform to look like someone his opponent loves, so they can't attack him."
A blinding flash, and then Matt, or Transformon transformed to look like Matt, stood in front of Vanan.

>"You know I love you, Vanan."
"Vanan, don't mmmph-" Matt's, the real Matt, sentence was cut short by a gag stuffed into his mouth by another one of Puppetmon's henchmen.

>"Why can't we ignore our differences and just be together."
Vanan's eyes carried a look of total uncertainty. The imposter continued his attack.

>"You know when we almost kissed I knew we were meant for each other. We belong together." He said, lifting her head to make her look straight in the eye. She looked into those Cobalt-Blue eyes that she grew to love so much. She squinted, trying to search for something yet still seeming to be taken in.
The real Matt tried to scream something through his gag and struggled furiously against the incredibly superior strength of his digimon captors.

>His eyes were missing something. This...fake leaned in whispering "I think we should finish that kiss."
The real Matt's eyes grew wide.

>She leaned forward, seeming to be taken in, but just trying to buy more time. Then she knew. She knew what her attackers eyes were missing! The very soul and spirit that made Matt Matt. The uncanny love and anger, the undying devotion to his brother. When she looked into the real Matt's eyes she could almost see what's in his heart. She could almost see herself, and TK, and Tai and Sora and Mimi and Izzy and Joe and Kari and Gabumon and Gatomon and Patamon and Agumon and Palmon and Biyomon and Gomamon and Tentomon. This imposter just had a lust for blood, and violence, and power and death. Suddenly she brought her knee up into his chest, knocking the wind out of him! Spinning around, she grabbed the chain that held her captive to the floor and with a mighty force of strength, pulled the chain up and over and down onto her attacker's head. Spinning in the opposite direction, she gave him a blow to the head with the manacled end. Transformon's eyes filled with black as he screamed, melting away as digimon bodies do when they die. She stood, proud and victorious, nonchalantly swinging the chain around and around in a deadly

whirl.
"That can't happen!" Puppetmon screamed in outrage.
>"It just did." Vanan said in a menacing tone.
"Well, this battle hasn't been lost yet! You still haven't been able to face yourself and transform into what you really are...nothing!"
>Vanan just shrugged.
"Well, I have one more game I want to play, and it'll make you transform. And when you realize what you are, you will be so tormented that you can't fight. And I'll put an end to the DigiDestiend once and for all, since they will never be able to win against us without their Guidance!"
>Suddenly Puppetmon disappeared and so did Matt!
"Yoo-hoo! Over here!" came Puppetmon's voice. He was dangling Matt by the neck over the edge of the cliff beyond the screen. "A one, a two, and a three!"

>Matt screamed as he plummeted down the side of the cliff.
But Vanan ran full speed and in no time reached the edge of the cliff. She jumped up and the same golden glow overtook her eyes and the same swift wind swirled around her. She momentarily spread her majestic bat-like wings to gain balance, then plummeted down after Matt.

>I'll never be able to make it in time! She thought desperately.
"Fire Wind!" The command was heard all through the coliseum. The DigiDestiend and the digimon, both good and bad alike, strained their eyes to see what was happening.
>Vanan was being pushed along like a rocket by the flames emerging from her hands. She stopped the command and reached out and grabbed Matt's shirt just before he reached the ground.
"Huh? Vanan?"

>"It's okay, I've got you."
Matt let out an audible sigh of relief.

>She stretched out her wings and held him against her chest, flipping over so that he wouldn't be dragged along the ground. Then she leveled out vertically and shot up the side of the cliff wall.
The DigiDestined were relieved to see Vanan and Matt fly over to them. She set the trembling Matt down and jumped back into place in the coliseum, facing Puppetmon.

>"Okay, Puppetmon. I challenge you to a battle to the finish. I loose, you keep the DigiDestiend. I win, we get to go."
"Okay, yay, this will be fun!"

>"Don't be so sure." She hissed. Then three golden-colored knife-sized claws sprung out of her left hand, then right hand, and then the same for her feet. She assumed a fighting stance. None of the DigiDestiend ever realized how deadly and dangerous she could actually be. Her wings were tucked tightly against her and her tail was swishing back and forth, almost like a how a snake waves its head back and forth when it's getting ready to strike. She stood fairly relaxed but in a way that she was ready to spring into action at any moment.
"What is she doing!? She's an ultimate and he's a mega, she has no chance against him!" Izzy gasped, staring at his computer.

>"Leave her alone. I have a feeling she's gonna be alright." Matt whispered.
"Puppet pammult!" Shouted Puppetmon.

>"Fire Wind!" Vanan yelled over the attack.
Fire met light as the two battled. They clashed in an orb of orange until Puppetmon began to force her attack back. Vanan knew that she couldn't hold out so with the speed of a striking adder she jumped up and out of the way barely avoiding the attack.

>"Now you'll see my true power!" Puppetmon boasted.

"Shield!"
"Nothing can get through Puppetmon's shield attack. But he can attack from the inside!" Izzy exclaimed.

>"Puppet pamult, Puppet Pamult, Puppet Pamult!" Puppetmon shouted in

glee, watching as Vanan desperately dodged attack after attack. She was staying calm, but everyone knew she wouldn't be able to make it much longer.
"Now, to finish you off, Puppet Pammult!" Vanan felt herself being forced down to the ground in a shower of pain. But she refused to scream.

>"Vanan!" Matt yelled. Suddenly, the Crest of Friendship began to glow. In the midst of Puppetmon's attack, the Crest of Guidance began to glow too.
Don't give up, Vanan. I need you. We all need you. I know if you try your hardest you can beat this! Matt thought.

>I know, Matt, but remember, I'm only as strong as you make me. Vanan replied.
Then we'll fight this thing together!

>Yeah, together!
"Go get him, Vanan!"

>Suddenly Vanan felt as if the strength in her body would never weaken. She was stronger, faster, more alert, more powerful than ever before.
A snarl escaped her throat and suddenly her claws began to glow a bright white. With movements faster than the eye can follow she escaped from Puppetmon assault and destroyed his shield!

>She landed in a guarding position in front of the DigiDestiend.

"You may have destroyed my shield, but you won't be able to defeat my Mega Puppet Pamult!" The green and sickening yellow attack streamed out from his hammer.

>Vanan closed her eyes, spread out one wing, then the other. A white glow overtook her. Then just as Puppetmon's attack was about to claim her she put her palms together, claws out, and whispered
"Hyper Energy." The white glow seeped slowly from her body as a white beam cut through the writhing mass of sickness, making its way up to Puppetmon. Puppetmon began to glow hot white, and then scream in pain. Vanan took a backwards leap and hovered over the DigiDestiend and their digimon. Putting her

>hands in front of her, about four inches apart, palms facing each other, a golden-yellow orb began to form between her hands.

"Lightning Shield." She whispered, holding the light high above her head. a dome formed around them, blocking out Puppetmon's death screams. Suddenly, Puppetmon exploded outwards, destroying everything, building and digimon alike, except for the ones that were in Vanan's shield.
The next thing they new , Vanan was standing on a pile of rubble, watching them, waiting for their eyes to adjust to the change in light, but, also waiting for something else.

>"I'm sorry." She whispered.
"About what?" Joe demanded. "You just saved us from being fried by Puppetmon, not to mention saving Matt, and you're saying your sorry!?"

>Vanan simply nodded. "I lied to the only friends I've had in 11 years. I was wrong to do that."
"That's okay, Vanan. I probably would have done the same thing if I were in your shoes." Tai said. He was met with a chorus of agreement from the other DigiDestiend. TK then walked up to her, and looked at her straight in the eye. "Vanan, please don't go away. We all need you!" Suddenly a smile crossed his face. "We can be your family now!"

>"TK..." Vanan was at a loss for words. Then smiled. It wasn't forced this time, but it came from her heart. "I think you guys already are."
Then there was confusion as everyone tried to hug everyone else. Matt wouldn't let go of her and he kept telling her how much he loved her. She just held on to him and TK and tried to hold on to everybody else. She was happy now that she finally felt like she was home. Maybe that's because she was.

>
Even though life-changing things happen, some routines just don't stop. Vanan stood by and watched as TK and Patamon tried not to go to sleep but couldn't help it, and as Matt laid a blanket over the two. She heard the familiar sounds of Izzy typing away at his

computer and Tentomon nagging him to go to sleep. She could here Sora, Kari, Gatomon, and Biyomon already softly snoring, and Joe and Mimi's latest argument over where the 'line' should be and who crossed it, while their digimon stood aside in quite resignation, and Tai and Agumon trying to break up the squabble and finally succeeding. Yes. She thought. This is where I belong, this is my home, and my life. But, still. She decided to take a walk. She needed to think this over. She turned around and walked silently into the forest.

>Matt saw her leave and decided to follow her. After making sure TK was alright, he followed her trail, which was easy since she wasn't trying to hide where she was going. She didn't need to. He saw her standing by a small pond, his heart seemed to rise in his chest. The wind blew softly against her fur and swept her tail to the side. She is so...beautiful. He couldn't stop himself from thinking it. He didn't want to stop himself from thinking it. Walked up to her and stood beside her. And for a time that seemed to be and eternity he was just with her. No words or actions were needed. She finally turned and looked steadily into his eyes, not moving her gaze for one second. This time her eyes carried only joy and happiness and love. He closed his eyes and leaned forward and pressed his lips against hers, wrapping his arms around her waist, and she wrapped her arms around his neck, they were holding on to each other like they'd never let go. Slowly Matt opened his eyes and Vanan followed shortly after.

"I love you."

>"I love you too."
And that was all that needed to be said.

>AN I do not own digimon! new part coming soon!

>

> <p><p>

End
file.